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Friday, 04 Apr 2014

WELCOME to the South

TRANSFORMING CHURCHES, TRANSFORMING LIVES

Southeast Conference UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

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Celebration

Chris Waldron, New Church Developer, Gets Married

We are pleased to announce that Chris Waldron, who has been called to serve as new church developer for Praxis UCC, in Atlanta, has been approved for transferring his ministerial standing from the Ohio Conference, and was married two months ago to Leah Lyman, a UCC student in care in her first year at Candler School of Theology. Leah was a UCC volunteer at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS before coming to seminary.



Ken Samuel, Pastor and Founder of Victory Church, Stone Mountain, Announces Candidacy for the Georgia House District 89

Dr. Kenneth L. Samuel has announced that he is a candidate for the Georgia House District 89. The theme of his campaign will be "engagement, education and economy" and the assurance that "no one will be left behind"... for more information visit the campaign web site: <http://kennethsamuel4ga.com/>.

Rev. Roy Bain Announces His Retirement

Roy Bain, who has served as pastor of Lanett Congregational Christian Church for nineteen years has announced his retirement to take effect on April 4th, 2010. Roy has been a leader in the life of the Southeast Conference and the East Alabama-West Georgia Association through the years, serving as Moderator of the Conference and the Association, on numerous committees in the Association and the Conference, including recently serving as a delegate to General Synod XXVI, in Hartford, Connecticut. Roy and his wife Wanda will be living in North Alabama.

Tim Downs Attends Conference Ministers' Retreat

November 30th to December 2nd, Tim Downs attended a retreat for UCC Conference Ministers held at Duke Divinity School, the theme of which was exploring models of leadership. Sixteen of the 38 conference ministers were present.


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Celebrate!



Andrew Young Video Series on Africa

Andrew Young, a UCC minister and member of First Congregational UCC has just produced a series of videos on various stories of hope and promise across Africa, which will be broadcast on PBS over the coming months. Keep an eye open!

Gwen Thomas, Victory Member, Appointed UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns Interim Executive

Gwen Thomas, a member of Victory Church in Stone Mountain, has been appointed Interim Executive Director of the UCC Coalition. A candidate for licensed ministry in the UCC, Gwen is a TAP participant, and an active member of Victory Church. She also has been a consultant for ONA and LGBT issues in the Southeast Conference.

Rodney Franklin, First Church Birmingham Receives Grant

Rodney Franklin has been accepted into a Lilly Foundation funded program this summer at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA. The program, which was promoted through the Leaders' Link, is intended to equip small church pastors for effective ministry.

Retirement Celebration for Roy Bain Will Be Held March 21st

The ministry of Roy Bain, who has served for nineteen years as pastor of Lanett Congregational Christian Church, will be celebrated at a reception on Sunday, March 21st. All are invited to rejoice in this occasion and recognize Roy's leadership in the Conference and Association. The reception will be from 2:00-4:00pm (EST) at the church, 900 South 7th Avenue, Lanett, AL 36863. Roy has served as moderator of both the conference and association, has served on numerous boards and committees in both settings, and been an important voice in the national setting of the church through the years. He has served his entire ministry in the Southeast Conference.

Long Time Pastor of Circular Congregational, Charleston, SC, Prepares to Retire

Bert Keller, senior pastor of Circular Congregational UCC, Charleston, SC, has announced his retirement following a ministry of almost 40 years, effective June 2010. The church will be seeking an intentional interim minister as it prepares to undertake a search for a called pastor.

Installations of Belvidere and Knoxville Pastors Rescheduled to March

On January 31st Leslie Etheredge, was to be installed as associate pastor at Church of the Savior, UCC, Knoxville, TN, and Diantha Brown as pastor of First United Church of Christ, Belvidere, TN. Both installations were cancelled due to weather, and rescheduled. Leslie will be installed at 11:00A (EST) on March 7th, and Diantha, at 3:00P (CST) on March 14th, with Conference Minister Tim Downs preaching.

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SEC Conference News



October 24th Board of Directors Meeting Summary

- The Board reviewed a preliminary budget for 2010 which reflects a continued commitment to maintain program and staffing at current levels.
- Cameron Trimble reported on the development of a Center for Progressive Renewal to be located in the Conference offices in which the Southeast Conference is a partner.
- Chris Waldron was called by the Board to serve as the new church developer for Praxis UCC, a new church start in Atlanta.
- The Board reviewed the plans for a rebuilding of the conference web site to be completed by December 31st, and continued development of the Leaders' Link as a primary communication tool.
- Kathy Clark reported on the continued expansion of the TAP program, as well as a transition in her work to equip people for ministry more broadly understood than simply the TAP program. She also reported on progress in bringing TAP more fully on line.
- Tim reported on the upcoming changes in staff and job descriptions as well as other developments in information technologies for the Conference.
- We continue to cultivate churches seeking affiliation in the Atlanta area and Alabama

Organization of the Southeast Conference History Project

Annual Report of Christian Hospital Mungeli 2008-2009

Dr. Anil Henry is a missionary partner with the Southeast Conference, UCC. We are pleased to present his update report.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the entire report.

Out-patient Services: The numbers in the outpatient just keep on going. I think it has to do with the fact that we are in India where the Population is also growing each day. But also there may be other factors involved. Our wild life in the OPD region has increased as from the already added aquariums that were fascinating for the village children; we now have a large aviary that the Atlanta group inaugurated this winter. There are about 60 birds in it and it is right in-front of the Operation theatre and a great joy for everyone to see. There is also a second water fall that is designed and full of colourful fish, nothing close to what people of this have experienced. Our skill with the gastroscope has surely increased as we are now performing more sclerotherapies for bleeding and elective varices. The scope has also been of great use in working with cases of tracheal stenosis and even pulling out a foreign body. We hope that we can get a bronchoscope to do that sometime which will make the task easier.

In-Patient Services: We are a 80 bed hospital which has a bed occupancy of 83.2 percent. It has been a relatively busy year with numbers of inpatients going up. It is still interesting to see that the average hospital stay of a patient is 7.27 days. This is because of two reasons: 1. Patients come from villages which are difficult to reach and so they want all the work done and sutures removed before they leave. 2. The cost for staying in hospital is relatively much cheaper than any other setting in a city or the western world.

We are ever so thankful to move into one of the new renovated wards and next we inaugurated the new surgical ICU/Recovery room, Delivery Room and Casualty. We now have a total of 16 ICU beds, 8 in the medical ICU, 7 in the surgical ICU and a isolation bed/treatment room which we have already been

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able to use and save a very sick tetanus patient.

We also realized that the ICU facilities are highly used and so the moment we had the surgical ICU built, we immediately renovated the medical ICU which had been heavily overused for the past four years. All these areas are now air-conditioned and with the help of monitors for each bed, ventilators and also a syringe pump we feel that we are getting closer to managing the more difficult patients. One patient of course, was Mom who was in the ICU for about two weeks.

We also have a new nursery which has eight beds and this too is a great service as there is nothing like it anywhere around.

We are now almost finished with redoing and renovating the ground floor of the ward. This was the only space that was accessible to me when I joined here six years ago. After this, we will be working on the first floor with new flooring and tiles on the wall to make things look good and clean.

CLICK HERE to read the entire report.

Georgia-South Carolina Association In Care Committee Meets October 31

The Georgia-South Carolina In Care Committee met October 31st and in addition to hearing updates from each of the students in care, acted to recommend the renewal of the in care status of the following people: Charmaine Johnson, Victory Church, Stone Mountain, Leslie Raymer, Virginia-Highland Church, Atlanta, John and Rebecca Shillingburg, Church of the Savior, Roswell, Michelle Calderon, Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, Ronnie Galvin and Terri Lawrence of First Congregational UCC, Atlanta, Carolyn Hayford, and Elizabeth Lorick of Circular Congregational UCC, Charleston, and Karen Mann and David Sigmund of Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta.

Further, they are recommending that student in care status be limited to no more than five years until a person appears before an ecclesiastical council, and that if they are found to be ordainable pending a call, they can continue for up to three more years. After that they would need to request a renewal of their status.

East Alabama-West Georgia Association Holds Annual Meeting October 10th

The East Alabama-West Georgia Association held its Annual Meeting October 10th at Oak Grove Congregational Christian Church in Pine Mountain, GA. Associate Conference Minister Kathy Clark introduced the new direction to authorizing ministry in the United Church of Christ, Multiple Paths to Ministry. The associate renewed the licenses for ministry of Rip Hardman, Hugh Hogan and Jim Johnson. Don Harmon, of Lanett Congregational Christian Church continues as moderator and treasurer of the association, Betty Moon of Sandy Creek UCC, as secretary. Committee chairs remained unchanged.

Posted on November 23, 2009

Michael Stroud of United Church UCC, Huntsville is currently doing extensive research into the history of the Southeast Conference in preparation for writing a history of the Conference to be published in time for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Conference in 2016. He has asked the Board of Directors to organize a History Project Task Force of people who have an interest in the history of the UCC and its predecessor bodies in the South. Please contact Tim Downs at tdowns@secucc.org if you would like to be considered for nomination to the Task Force.

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News From our Local Churches



Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson, SC Dedicates Offering to Haitian Relief

They may be a small church start, but their hearts are big! Following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson, dedicated an entire Sunday offering of \$700 to Haitian relief. This gift was lifted up on the UCC web site. Visit them at <http://www.thepeacechurch.org/>

Historic Midway Congregational UCC Celebrates M.L. King Jr. Day

Midway Congregational UCC, Midway, GA has a long history of advocacy for racial justice. This history has extended to its connection with Dorchester Academy, the first educational institution to provide education to African-Americans in Liberty County, to its role in hosting a Citizenship School during the Civil Rights struggle, when they welcomed Martin Luther King, Jr., Andrew Young, and many other leaders of the movement. They continued this rich tradition by their participation in the Annual M.L.King, Jr. Leadership Breakfast, January 16th. Acknowledging the importance of the Midway Congregational UCC through the years one speaker noted, "Midway is a history making place!" The Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries on



January 22, 2010 recognized Deborah Robinson (a TAP graduate and Midway member!) for her work on the Dorchester Academy African American History Museum, adjacent to the church.

[Click here to read full article - Celebrating MLK Day Where Many Leaders Have Tread](#)

Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, Dedicates Renovated Sanctuary

Following a capital campaign Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, GA, has rebuilt their youth annex, and refurbished their sanctuary, expanding seating, installing stained glass windows, improving the seating, and more. The sanctuary will be rededicated on February 14th at their morning service.

First Congregational UCC, Savannah Begins a TAP Group

Five people have gathered together to begin a TAP group at First Congregational UCC.

United Church Huntsville Plans Building Expansion

On January 31, United Church of Huntsville, Alabama voted to hire an architectural firm to draw up designs for an addition to its building for which it has been raising money for two years. Built in 1968, the present fellowship hall has become inadequate to accommodate the membership growth of over 30 % since 2005.

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A Note from the Conference Minister



“Reflections on the Changing Face of American Denominationalism” / 02.24.10



Dear Friends,

A season of tidal shifts is reshaping the UCC. I am deeply aware of these shifts in this season. There are many parts of the church in which these new and unwelcomed tides are bringing decline in giving and membership.

Southeast Conference has faced challenges from its very beginning. We have always been a corner of the larger church that has been shaped by adversity. The four traditions that came together to be the United Church of Christ were voices advocating for Christian unity, justice equality and inclusivity. These were always minority

voices in a South, the religious traditions of which are very different from ours.

The very qualities that have made our presence in the South a struggle are qualities that have strengthened us in the Southeast Conference for the living of these days. We have been a people who have prevailed through the years, not because of numerical strength or affluence, but because we have been strengthened by our calling as a people of God. We have found sustenance in our dreams of a “new heaven and a new earth, where every tear will be wiped away”, and have been grounded in a Gospel that will not let us go, and calls us to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.”

As I have listened to the reports of those who have been visitors for our Campaign for the Future of the Conference, I have been encouraged, because so many of you in our pews and pulpits understand the power of the visions that guide us, and are preparing to say “yes!” I am not surprised, because I know that we will continue to find our strength in the right places and our sustenance in the right hopes and dreams.

Peace,
Tim Downs
Timothy C. Downs

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